

Three years ago this week, Congress reached a [bipartisan compromise](#) on a new framework designed to move America's trade policy forward. At that time, there were four pending free trade agreements awaiting congressional approval. Today, three long years later, Congress has still not passed three of them: market opening agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. The agreements would level the playing field for U.S. goods and services which currently face high tariffs and other barriers when entering these markets.

The failure to act on them has given our foreign competitors a tremendous advantage. While we have been sitting on the sidelines for three years, Colombia has negotiated agreements with Canada and the European Union and implemented agreements with Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. These agreements provide our major competitors with the new market access and increased export opportunities that were negotiated years ago for America's farmers and ranchers. As a result, the American Farm Bureau Federation found that U.S. agricultural exports to Colombia dropped 50 percent last year as Argentina and Brazil have used their trade agreements and new duty-free access to take market share away from American exporters. Northern California agricultural producers could lose even more exports and market share in Colombia if Canada and the European Union implement their trade agreements with Colombia before the United States. A recently released [report](#) provides additional evidence on the severe damage to U.S. agriculture caused by the delay in implementation of this agreement.

Clearly, American workers are worse off and falling further behind our competitors as Congress continues to delay action on the pending trade agreements. According to the President's own analysis, the three pending trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea would create 250,000 new private sector jobs. With over 15 million Americans unemployed, workers deserve the jobs that would be created by expanding exports, and they need President Obama to show leadership and actively encourage Democrat members of Congress to approve the pending agreements without further delay.